

Tuesday, April 28, 2009
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***Both institutions recognized for the
'very best American scientists and engineers'***

(WASHINGTON, DC) - Congressman Russ Carnahan (MO-3) congratulates the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center and Washington University in St. Louis for having been awarded the designation of Energy Frontier Research Centers (EFRCs) by the Department of Energy (DOE) to address critical knowledge and technology gaps in making the U.S. energy independent.

The Danforth Center's objective is to increase the efficiency of photosynthesis and production of energy-rich molecules in plants that could be used for everyday fuel consumption needs. Washington University has been chosen to study the feasibility of using man-made systems to convert sunlight into energy much like plants do through photosynthesis.

"America's energy independence is going to take a commitment from everyone including our best scientists, government officials, private industry and ordinary people doing their part," said Congressman Carnahan. "Energy has become a national security issue and the U.S. has lacked a comprehensive approach for entirely too long - a Band-Aid here and there is not going to make us energy independent."

The nationwide EFRC program to help the U.S. become energy independent will have 700 senior investigators and employ, on a full- or part-time basis, an estimated 1,100 researchers, including postdoctoral associates, graduate students, undergraduate students, and technical staff.

"The President has committed to setting us on a real path toward energy independence by honoring and promoting American science and innovation," said Carnahan. "The Recovery Act, his budget proposal and energy legislation being discussed in Congress today outlines a comprehensive approach to solving the energy crisis threatening our nation's security - scientific research is one part of that approach."

The DOE received over 260 applicants and only 46 institutions were chosen as an EFRC. The Danforth Center is one of only two non-profit organizations awarded the designation.

"The awarding of these two prestigious designations to St. Louis' own Danforth Center and Washington University is testament to the national and global reputation of our scientific community," said Carnahan. "St. Louis has become a leader in the scientific

community and I applaud these two institutions for being in the forefront of making our nation energy independent."

Thirty EFRCs, including the Danforth Center and Washington University are being funded at a total annual cost of \$100 million under the Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 Federal Budget. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, supported by Congressman Carnahan, provided an additional \$277 million, enabling the DOE to establish an additional 16 EFRCs and fund them for five years.

For a more detailed description of the two area projects and the nationwide program please visit: http://www.er.doe.gov/bes/EFRC_Synopses.pdf

Congressman Carnahan serves on the House Science and Technology Committee as well as the Research and Science Education Subcommittee.

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